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# Making Patristics Pertinent: Theological Echoes and Anticipations from John Henry Newman's 1833 Mediterranean Tour

Beyond the bare facts, little is popularly known about John Henry Newman's 1833 Mediterranean tour. While Newman's biographers describe his journey in lively detail,[1] common knowledge is generally limited to three facts. Firstly, beginning in December of 1832, Newman spent seven months travelling across the Mediterranean Sea. Secondly, during the last leg of his journey, he fell gravely ill with typhoid fever in Sicily, and, thirdly, while sailing to Marseilles en route back to England, he composed his famous poem *The Pillar of the Cloud* better known by its opening line "Lead, Kindly Light." The Maltese may themselves be mindful of the unpleasant month that Newman spent in Malta where, at first, he

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[1] See Vincent Ferrer Blehl, *Pilgrim Journey: John Henry Newman 1801-1845* (London: Burns & Oates, 2001), 112-128; Louis Boyer, *Newman: Sa vie. Sa spiritualite* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1952), 153-202; Sheridan Gilley, *Newman and His Age* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1990), 94-108; Ian Ker, *John Henry Newman: A Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 54-80; Bertram Newman, *Cardinal Newman: A Biographical and Literary Study* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1925), 30-35; Meriol Trevor, *Newman: The Pillar of the Cloud* (London: MacMillan & Co, 1962,112-143); Wilfrid Ward, *The Life of John Henry Cardinal Newman* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1912), 50-55; Dr. Zeno, *John Henry Newman: His Inner Life* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987), 60-66.

was quarantined for twelve days in the Lazaretto and then afterwards confined to his hotel room for close to a week on account of a severe cough brought on by the cold night air. Thus, initially quarantined and confined, Newman had only a few days remaining in order to see the sights before he departed for Sicily and the Italian peninsula. In his *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, Newman himself dedicates only three pages to those seven months in southern Europe.[2] In those pages, his chief concern is to demonstrate, firstly, what little contact he had with Catholics while abroad and, secondly, how attentively he followed political and ecclesiastical events then unfolding in England. The latter convinced him, that upon his return to England, he had a work to do. In contrast to the *Apologia*, however, Newman's *Letters and Diaries* offer abundant information about his Mediterranean tour.

In letters sent home to family and friends, Newman recounts in great detail not only the sights that he has seen, but also the thoughts that those scenes have provoked. From Rome, in a long letter to his sister Jemima, he explains, "I have been writing a great many letters, as long as this is - which, I think, does me much credit. Each is nearly a sermon in point of matter."[3] These letters have provided his biographers with a wealth of information. Their scholarly interest in Newman's Mediterranean correspondence, however, has been mainly biographical and historical. But Newman's epistolary reflections are also theologically rich. They draw upon his previous research and give glimpses into his future theological development. As we shall see, John Henry Newman's 1833 Mediterranean tour proves to be a voyage of theological echoes and anticipations that make his previous patristic studies particularly pertinent. Journeying with young Newman across the Mediterranean Sea, we ourselves shall undertake a biographical-historical voyage viewed through a theological lens. Our own itinerary will be both thematic and geographic. Along the way, we shall linger at Malta.

## Newman's Patristic Scholarship

Before we embark for the Mediterranean, it is necessary to recall Newman's scholarly endeavors before and after his 1833 journey. In March of 1831, Hugh James Rose requested that John Henry Newman contribute a history of the early Church councils for a new library of theological works that he was co-editing along with William Rowe Lyall. Newman's research for that volume soon

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[2] See John Henry Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (New York: Doubleday, 1956), 150-152.

[3] John Henry Newman , "To Jemima Newman, 20 March 1833," *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, eds. Ian Ker and Thomas Gornall (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1979), 3:265.

concentrated solely upon the fourth-century Arian crisis. That study instilled in Newman a great appreciation for the Alexandrian Church in general and Athanasius in particular.[4] Newman completed his manuscript in September of 1832, but he did not publish the work until November of the following year. Among other topics treated in *The Arians of the Fourth Century*, Newman highlights the role of the laity in defending the orthodox faith when ecclesiastical rulers betray it. To illustrate his argument, Newman quotes a passage from Hilary of Poitiers: "Sanctiores sunt aures plebis quam corda sacerdotum" (The ears of the people are holier than the hearts of priests.) As we shall see, during the winter of 1833 at both Malta and Sicily, Newman's patristic research for *Arians* finds poignant confirmation in the witness of two Catholic laymen who attest to their faith when, for diverse reasons, the clergy fail to do so. This particular echo is likewise an anticipation. In his 1859 *Rambler* article, *On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine*, Newman will apply these same patristic insights to the question of the laity's role in the Catholic Church. Citing Hilary yet once again, he will argue for the *consensus fidelium*'s indispensable role in witnessing to the orthodox faith in a time of crisis when there is a momentary suspension of the *Ecclesia docens*.

As Newman traveled throughout the Mediterranean, news reached him of the newly elected Whig Parliament's machinations against the Church of England.[5] The Whig party agenda did not bode well for the freedom of the English Church.[6] Newman's thoughts immediately turned to the Church Fathers - to Athanasius and Ambrose in particular. For during the Arian crisis both had opposed Arianizing Emperors. Newman likened to Ambrose his friend and colleague, John Keble, whom the government's intervention in ecclesiastical matters had roused to action.[7] Within a week of Newman's return to England in July of 1833, Keble mounted the pulpit in Saint Mary the Virgin, Oxford University's parish church, and preached the Assize Sermon on *The National Apostasy*, protesting against the Whig Parliament's Irish Church Temporalities Bill that had suppressed ten Anglican Sees in Ireland and effectively reduced

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[4] See Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, 145.

[5] See John Henry Newman, *LD* v. III, 224 (To Mrs Newman, 28 Feburary 1833).

[6] See Newman, *LD* v. III, 292-293 (To Walter John Trower, 16 April 1833).

[7] See Newman, *LD* v. III, 264 (To Jemima Newman, 20 March 1833): "We find Keble at length is roused, and (*if* once up) he will prove a second St Ambrose - others too are moving - so that wicked Spoliation Bill is already doing service, no thanks to it."

Anglicanism to a branch of government. Newman insists that Keble's sermon marked the beginning of the Oxford Movement.[8]

In the following months and years, Newman's *Letters on the Church of the Fathers* and his contributions to the *Tracts for the Times* will form part of his efforts at a second Anglican reformation. In the first three of his *Letters on the Church of the Fathers* published in the *British Magazine* in the autumn of 1833 just as *Arians* appeared in the bookshops, Newman recounts Ambrose's heroic, fourth-century opposition to the Arian Boy-Emperor Valentinian II and his formidable mother, the Empress Justina. When the Imperial Court attempted to requisition the Portian Basilica located outside Milan's city walls for Arian worship, Ambrose resisted with all his might. Bereft of governmental backing, the Bishop of Milan turned to the laity for support. Even Augustine's mother, Monica, joined the Catholic resistance then occupying that basilica in order to impede an Arian takeover. In the 1830s, the new imperial foe was an infidel Parliament whose creature the English King had become.[9] Just as the Church Fathers had defended the faith against the Arian imperial party, Newman envisioned the Oxonians defending the Church of England with their own patristic armament. Mindful that king and aristocracy have failed the English Church, Newman insists, in the spirit of Ambrose: "We must *look to the people*."[10] Thus, in both *Arians* and the *Letters on the Church of the Fathers*, Newman identifies the laity's significant role in matters of faith. He applied his patristic studies in a not-so-subtle manner to the contemporary crisis confronting Anglicanism. From 1834 to 1837, Newman appealed to the Ancient Church in his construction of a theological *Via Media* between Roman corruptions and Protestant heresy for the sake of Anglican ecclesiastical reform. His volume *Lectures on the Prophetical Office of the Church viewed relatively to Romanism and Popular Protestantism* outlines that initiative. As we shall see, that volume's various principles are, in fact, already discernable in seminal form in Newman's epistolary observations from the Mediterranean. Also, clearly discernable are the seeds of Newman's later work on doctrinal development and the grammar of assent.

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[8] See Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (New York: Doubleday, 1956), 152.

[9] See Newman, *LD* v. III, 293 (To Walter John Trower, 16 April 1833).

[10] John Henry Newman, "What does St. Ambrose Say About It?," in *The Church of the Fathers* (Notre Dame: Gracewing, 2002), 340: italics in the original.

## Embarkment

On 8 December 1832, along with his sickly friend Richard Hurrell Froude and Froude's father, the Archdeacon Robert Hurrell Froude, a thirty-one-year-old John Henry Newman boarded the *Hermes*, a coal-fueled, steam-powered vessel bound for the Mediterranean. The younger Froude's health had been failing, and a winter excursion in the Mediterranean was thought to be an ideal remedy - Young Froude will, in fact, die from Tuberculosis some three years later -. The Froudes easily managed to convince an exhausted Newman to join them. His manuscript on the fourth-century Arian crisis, completed the previous summer, had costed him dearly, and he was much in need of a break. He had permission from his Bishop to absent himself from his ministerial duties until Easter. But once on board the *Hermes*, Newman wrote to His Lordship in order to request an extension. "For many years I have been in a weak state of health," he explains:

> Brought on, I may say without exaggeration, by a pressure of work in the University, and medical men have told me nothing would avail me but change of air [...] I may attribute much of my present weakness to overwork when I was curate of St Clement's.[11]

Oxford's Anglican Bishop, Robert Bagot, soon afterwards granted Newman's request and freed him until the following September. The young Oxonian's first days on board the *Hermes* proved to be just what the doctor had ordered. "Today has been the most pleasurable day, as far as external causes go, I have ever had, that I can recollect," the thirty-one-year-old writes to his mother after only three days at sea.[12] That same day, steaming past the Iberian peninsula, Newman saw foreign land for the first time in his life. Six days later, on Monday, 17 December, he briefly disembarked at Gibraltar, "the first foreign land I ever set foot on," he exuberantly shares with his sister Harriett.[13] The sight of the sea, upon which he sailed, conjured up thoughts of ancient empires, biblical ordeals and patristic journeys. "Here the Romans engaged the Carthaginians," he muses, "here the Phoenicians traded -here Jonah was in the storm - here St Paul was shipwrecked - here the great Athanasius voyaged to Rome and to Constantinople."[14] The thought of Athanasius immediately brought to Newman's mind the ecclesiastical challenges looming on the English horizon. In verse he asks:

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[11] Newman, *LD* v. III, 141 (To Richard Bagot, Bishop of Oxford, 16 December 1832).
[12] Newman, *LD* v. III, 129 (To Mrs Newman, 11 December 1832).
[13] Newman, *LD* v. III, 146 (To Harriett Newman, 18 December 1832).
[14] Newman, *LD* v. III, 156 (To Mrs Newman, 19 December 1832).

When shall our northern Church her champion see,
Raised by high heaven's decree,
To shield the ancient faith at his own harm?
Like him who stayed the arm
Of tyrannous power, and learning's sophist tone,
Keen-visioned Seer, alone.[15]

In the fourth stanza of that same poem, Newman lauds Ambrose with equally tremendous overtones:

And Ambrose' pastoral might we celebrate,
Tho' with unequal fate,
When in dark times our champion crossed a king.
—But good in everything
Comes as ill's cure. Dim Future! shall we NEED
A Prophet for truth's creed?16

The Arian crisis had been a Mediterranean crisis. Beginning at Alexandria, it unfolded along its shores. Newman's book-knowledge of that crisis took on flesh as he sailed across the Mediterranean Sea. From its incarnation, he drew courage for the challenges that lay ahead.

## Travel

Travel inevitably expands one's horizons and opens one's mind for better or for worse. On board the *Hermes*, Newman initially approached his new experiences with caution, explaining to his sister Harriett, "I no longer wonder at younger persons being carried away with travelling, and corrupted - for certainly the illusions of the world's magic can hardly be fancied while one remains at home."[17] Only the previous May, in the seventh of his *University Sermons*, Newman had commented upon the faith-challenges that await youth when they leave home. "The simple and comparatively retired life which they have hitherto enjoyed is changed for the varied and attractive scenes of mixed society," Newman preaches:

> Its numberless circles and pursuits open upon them, the diversities and contrarieties of opinion and conduct, and of the subjects on which thought and exertion are expended. This is what is called seeing the world. Here, then, all at

[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid., 146

> once they lose their reckoning, and let slip the lessons which they thought they had so accurately learned.[18]

Young Newman himself had never been tempted by the pleasantries of social life at Oxford. Indeed, the university students' drinking binges had disgusted him. But travel proved to be a different matter. For now he was quite literally "seeing the world." Did he fear that Mediterranean Christianity might challenge his Anglican faith? It seems unlikely at that moment, yet in retrospect it was, no doubt, a legitimate concern. "I think it does require strength of mind," young Newman writes, "to keep the thoughts [where] they should be while the varieties of strange sights, political, moral and physical, are passed before the eyes."[19] Newman initially attempted to maintain a strict mental discipline in this regard. Briefly docked at Algiers, for example, he averted his eyes rather than gaze upon the revolutionary *Tricolour* flying from the mast of a French ship.[20] That flag, whose rejection had partially cost the Bourbon King Charles X his throne only three years before, represented the liberalism that Newman so vehemently opposed. Indeed, Newman "believed that it was unchristian for nations to cast off their governors, and, much more, sovereigns who had the divine right of inheritance."[21] On this account, months later, when passing through Paris on his return to England, he refused on principle to tour the city.[22] Years later, having returned to Rome as a newly converted Catholic, Newman recalls the duty that he felt in 1833 to distance himself from all that he deemed harmful: "It is miserable to travel and to hear bells to which you may not respond, and to see processions and functions from which you feel a duty to turn away. I did so as a duty then."[23] But as Newman's 1833 correspondence reveals, his initial reserve did, in fact, give way to a rather adventuresome openness - at least outside of the Citizen King Louis-Philippe's France. He became so bold that, toward the end of his tour, he bid adieu to his traveling companions and ventured back to Sicily on his own. Confident that his wanderings would not unsettle him (indeed, if anything, they made him long for his quarters at Oriel College),[24] Newman

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[18] John Henry Newman, *Fifteen Sermons Preached Before the University of Oxford*, Sermon 7.4, 3rd ed. (London: Rivingtons, 1872), 123-124.

[19] Newman, *LD* v. III, 146 (To Harriett Newman, 18 December 1832).

[20] See Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, 151.

[21] Ibid., 148.

[22] See Ibid., 151.

[23] Newman, "To Mrs John Mozley, 19 May 1847," *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, ed. Charles Stephen Dessain (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1962): 12: 82.

[24] See Newman, *LD* v. III, 146 (To Harriett Newman, 18 December 1832).

decided to make the most of his travels.[25] For he was convinced that, once back at Oxford, he would never travel abroad again. Little could he have foreseen then that as a Catholic he would visit the Italian peninsula on three more occasions in 1846-47, 1856 and 1879. In 1833, however, after some initial hesitation, he does concede: "At all events it is no bad thing when seeing the world (as I am now) to take a draught at it, and not to sip merely what one likes."[26]

From the Lazaretto in Malta, Newman reflects further on the benefits of travel. "I think travelling a good thing for a secluded man," he writes to Isaac Williams, his curate at St. Mary's in Oxford,

> Not so much as showing him the world, as in realizing to him the limited sphere of his own powers. I do not see that hitherto I have gained one fact or impression about mankind which I had not before - but, tho' I ever have had notions of the extensiveness of the subject-matter which the mind takes cognizance of, and of the little part which the largest individual mind is able to take in of it and (inclusively) the little which myself knew or could do, I think I have much deepened my conviction of the intellectual weakness which attaches to a mere reading man - his inability to grasp and understand and appropriate things which befall him in life - so that he seems powerless as a child while the action of life is passing and repassing, and tossed about and caught and transmitted on all sides of him.[27]

Two key points emerge from these reflections: firstly, the distinction between notional knowledge and experiential or real knowledge, and, secondly, the human mind's limited operative powers. Newman will masterfully elaborate the first point in his epistemological study *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent*. As Ian Ker rightly observes: "It is noteworthy how [Newman's] later distinction between the "notional" and the "real" was not just formulated for a specific philosophical purpose, but was already early on very much part of his ordinary language and thought."[28] The second point will play a distinct role in Newman's understanding of doctrinal development.

The secluded or mere reading man has a broad notional knowledge of many things, but without experience he fails to grasp, understand and appropriate them adequately. Therein lies his intellectual weakness. The experience of travel, which does entail moments of crisis as anyone who has ever traveled knows all too well, occasions the previously secluded man's deeper understanding of the

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[25] See ibid., 155.

[26] See ibid., 165.

[27] See Newman, *LD* v. III, 194 (To Isaac Williams, 16 January 1833).

[28] Ker, *John Henry Newman,* 63.

knowledge that he already possesses notionally. Although, quantitively speaking, he gains no new knowledge, he does qualitatively gain greater insight into the world around him. The child, as it were, grows into a man. As Newman travels, he comes to reflect more deeply upon the notional knowledge of the ancient world that he already possesses. In a similar fashion, Newman will later argue that theological controversy provokes a greater comprehension of the deposit of faith that the Church has always possessed in its totality. While doctrinal development produces no new doctrines *in se*, it does result in a certain novelty, that is, in a more expansive, conscious understanding of the deposit of faith. This development marks the transition from a foundational awareness or unreflective knowledge of the faith to a complex or reflective consciousness. In his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, Newman will employ seven notes in order to determine a genuine doctrinal development. The fifth note is the anticipation of an idea's future. In his description of the fifth note, Newman concludes: "The fact, then, of such early or recurring intimations of tendencies which afterwards are fully realized, is a sort of evidence that those later and more systematic fulfilments are only in accordance with the original idea."[29] Newman's 1833 reflections on the benefit of travel for a mere reading man prove to be themselves an anticipation of the inner dynamic of his own future idea of doctrinal development.

One further observation about travel remains for us to consider. Newman insists that travel took the romance out of foreign places for him. "I have learned thus much by travelling," he tells Thomas Mozley, a former student and Oriel College Fellow, "to think all places about the same, which I had no notion of before - I never could believe that horses, dogs, men and houses were the same in other countries as at home - not that I exactly doubted it, but my imagination could not embrace the notion."[30] Walking about Corfu or Rome, Newman had "the same thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations as at home."[31] His experience of inclement weather and frequent colds in the Mediterranean, for example, led him not only to doubt the health benefits allegedly gained from such travel, but more importantly to conclude "that the ancients went on as we do."[32] Travelling, he acknowledges, "has in a measure destroyed the romance which I threw around everything I had not myself witnessed - yet perhaps it has taken away no

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[29] John Henry Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, part II, chapter V, section V (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), 196.

[30] Newman, *LD* v. III, 241 (To Thomas Mozley, 9 March 1833).

[31] Ibid., 242.

[32] Ibid., 241.

pleasure and may be profitable."[33] While notional knowledge may tend toward the romantic, real knowledge proves to be far more sober, but, in the end, no less satisfying. Indeed, it proves to be more pertinent. Newman's journey through that ancient Christian landscape made him aware of its sameness. He realized that "the ancients went on as we do." That notion certainly helped to prepare the way for the future Tractarian's claim that the contemporary Church of England, in turn, should go on as the ancient Christian Church did.

## The Church Fathers

John Henry Newman's first encounter with the Church Fathers took place in the autumn of 1816. He was fifteen years old. "I read Joseph Milner's Church History," Newman recounts, "and was nothing short of enamoured of the long extracts from St Augustine and the other Fathers which I found there. I read them as being the religion of the primitive Christians."[34] His love for the Church Fathers did indeed take deep root. But that same autumn, he also "read Newton on the Prophecies, and in consequence became most firmly convinced that the Pope was the Antichrist predicted by Daniel, St. Paul, and St. John."[35] These two works, Newman confesses, planted in him "the seeds of an intellectual inconsistency which disabled [him] for a long course of years."[36] That inconsistency will become most apparent during young Newman's five weeks in Rome.

During the Long Vacation of 1828, Newman, now a Fellow at Oriel College and Vicar at St. Mary the Virgin, undertook a systematic reading of the Church Fathers. He began with Ignatius of Antioch and Justin Martyr and read his way through the pre-Nicene Fathers. The project, however, ended in disappointment. For, despite his valiant efforts to analyze and categorize patristic thought, he gained very little from his reading on account of his faulty methodology. Rather than allowing the Church Fathers to speak to him on their own terms, he wrongly imposed foreign Protestant notions upon them. In 1835, when theologically constructing his *Via Media*, Newman acknowledged his earlier error and described it with an image reminiscent of his recent Mediterranean tour:

> It is so difficult to read without an object I may almost add so unprofitable - but I rather mean this - that nothing at all is done, if a man begins to read the Fathers

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[33] Ibid., 242.
[34] Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, 129.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.

> without a previous knowledge of controversies which are built upon them. Till then their writings are blank paper - controversy is like the heat administered to sympathetic ink. Thus, I read Justin very carefully in 1828 - and made most copious notes - but I conceive most of my time was thrown away. I was like a sailor landed at Athens or Grand Cairo, who stares about - does not know what to admire, what to examine - makes random remarks, and forgets all about it when he has gone.[37]

In a January 1839 article on the theology of Ignatius of Antioch for the *British Critic*, Newman employs a similar image to illustrate the need for a proper patristic methodology. "We believe it to be possible, nay and not uncommon," he writes:

> For a student to employ himself laboriously in the Fathers, and yet to attain to as little idea of the rich mines of thought, or the battle-fields which he is passing over, as if he was visiting the coasts of the Mediterranean without a knowledge of history or geology.[38]

Touring the Mediterranean in 1833, Newman certainly had a firm grasp on ancient history, but, as we shall see, he also demonstrated an amateur's interest in geology, a subject that he had, in fact, previously studied with great interest at Oxford.[39]

## Greece

The *Hermes* arrived in Malta on Christmas Eve. It remained in port only long enough to take on coal and to allow its passengers to choose rooms in the Lazaretto where they would be quarantined for at least two weeks, if not longer, upon their return from the Greek isles. On Saint Stephen's Day, the steamer set out again to sea on its way to Greece. "Greece has ever made my heart beat," Newman confesses.[40] As a child he had read Homer's *Odyssey*. At the age of ten, he delved into Virgil. Thucydides filled his imagination. These ancient authors' books accompanied Newman on board the *Hermes*, and they guided his travels across the Mediterranean Sea. As the *Hermes* approached the Greek isles, Newman grew ecstatic. He was full of joy, for he was "in the Greek sea, the scene

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[37] John Henry Newman, "To Robert Isaac Wilberforce, 30 August 1835," *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, ed. Thomas Gornall (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 5:133.

[38] John Henry Newman, "The Theology of the Seven Epistles of St, Ignatius," *Essays Critical and Historical*, 8th edition (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1888), 1:226.

[39] See John Henry Newman, "To Mrs Newman, 4 June 1819," *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, 1:65; Newman, *LD* v. I, 109 (To Mrs Newman, 8 June 1821).

[40] Newman, *LD* v. III, 291 (To Walter John Trower, 16 April 1833).

of old Homer's song and of the histories of Thucydides."[41] His childhood visions took shape before his very eyes. "I am Thucydides," he exclaims, "with the gift of second sight."[42] He did wonder, though, why the ancients had not described the magnificent landscape and its geology in greater detail. He simply concluded that they had taken its beauty for granted.[43] But Newman did not. The sight of the Peloponnese inspired Newman's muse and moved him to extol in verse not those ancient pagan authors, but rather the Greek Church Fathers:

> Let the world hymn thy heathen praise
> Fallen Greece! the thought of holier days
> In my sad heart abides—
> For sons of thine in Truth's first hour
> Were tongues and weapons of His power,
> Born of the Spirit's fiery shower,
> Our fathers and our guides.[44]

Throughout his voyage across the Mediterranean, Newman composed over one hundred poems for the *Lyra Apostolica*, the verse section of the *British Magazine*. These poems both document Newman's journey and reveal the state of his heart. Newman often includes them in his correspondence in conscious imitation of the Scottish romantic novelist Sir Walter Scott.[45]

On the isle of Zante just off the Morea, Newman, along with his traveling companions, entered a Greek Orthodox church. Unbeknownst to them at first, the Divine Liturgy was then taking place. Their easy access during the sacred rites offended them. But they remained, nonetheless. "I must say," Newman remarks, "the whole was very like a performance - tho' the Greeks do not (I believe) hold the sacrifice of the mass. - The ceremony in itself was most imposing to a stranger." [46] Prayers offered behind the iconostasis particularly struck him. It was Newman's first direct encounter with Greek Christianity. Later, at Corfu, after seeing the alleged body of St. Spiridion, a Nicene Father, he concluded that superstition abounded. He observed that the Greek clergy on the islands were of the lower rank, "very ignorant, but moral in their lives."[47] They apparently

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[41] Newman, *LD* v. III, 167 (To Jemima Newman, 29 December 1832).
[42] Newman, *LD* v. III, 177 (To Harriett Newman, 2 January 1833).
[43] See ibid.
[44] Newman, *LD* v. III,170 (To Jemima Newman, 29 December 1832).
[45] Newman, *LD* v. III, 220 (To Jemima Newman, 19 February 1833).
[46] Newman, *LD* v. III, 192 (To Jemima Newman, 15 January 1833).
[47] Newman, *LD* v. III, 181 (To Harriett Newman, 2 January 1833).

interfered little with their flocks who paid for their offerings and received the requested religious rites in return. The people themselves understood little of the ancient Greek language in liturgical use. But they did observe rigid fasts. "I fear outward ceremonies are the substitute for holiness," Newman observes.[48] While in a country church near Corfu, he leafed through two devotional books - one containing a collection of John Damascene's prayers. "There was little objectionable (that I saw) in either, and much that was very good."[49] Newman's immediate encounters with Greek Orthodoxy left him with a favorable impression. In fact, the more that he experienced the Greek and Latin Churches of the Mediterranean, the more he grew in admiration for them.[50] His mostly positive experience of Greek Orthodoxy also led him to reconsider Protestant objections to Roman Catholicism.

While generally favorable toward Greek Christianity, Protestants denounced the Church of Rome as the Antichrist. But Newman himself wonders: "what answer do Protestants make to the *fact* of the Greek Church invoking Saints, over honoring the Virgin, and substituting ceremonies for a reasonable service, which they say are the prophetic marks of the Antichrist?"[51] From what Newman perceived, the difference between Greeks and Romans was only a matter of degree, not kind. In terms of their devotions and practices, the Romans were simply more advanced Greeks. He judged both Rome and Constantinople, moreover, far superior to the Protestant sects that tended toward Unitarianism. Nonetheless, he assures his mother lest she have reason to be concerned: "I do not perceive that my opinion has in any respect changed about them - but it is fearful to have before one's eyes the perversion of all the best, the holiest, the most exalted feelings of human nature."[52] Indeed, while Newman may have favorably assessed Greek Christianity, he continued to judge harshly certain Roman Catholic tenets. The Greek Church's "corruptions," he suggests, "seem in the retrospect light as compared with those of Rome."[53] For Greek "saint worship" results from "the people's corruption of what is good."[54] It is not in itself an *act* of the Greek Church herself even though she does sanction it. But the Roman doctrines of the Mass and purgatory, Newman insists, are not simply

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[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.
[50] See Newman, *LD* v. III, 214 (To Harriett Newman, 16 February 1833).
[51] Newman, *LD* v. III, 205 (To Mrs Newman, 26 January 1833).
[52] Ibid., 204.
[53] Newman, *LD* v. III, 265 (To Jemima Newman, 20 March 1833).
[54] Ibid.

perversions of the good. They are, rather, pure inventions. Clearly, Newman had not shaken his earlier convictions. But his epistolary criticisms do reveal with greater intensity his youthful intellectual inconsistency. Contact with southern Europe's unreformed Christianity, the direct descendant of the Church of the Fathers, that Newman so ardently loved, had begun to have an effect.

## Malta

On 10 January 1833, after cruising the Greek isles for twelve days, the *Hermes* returned to Malta where it had previously docked from Christmas Eve until the feast of Saint Stephen. As we have already noted, Newman and the Froudes were allowed to disembark only long enough to choose their rooms at the Lazaretto in which they would be quarantined upon their return - "the most absurd of all humbugs," Newman complains.[55] Newman's first impression of the Lazaretto on that Christmas day was bleak. "A miserable prison looking building," he calls it.[56] Yet, by the time he had returned to Malta, he was happy enough to suffer quarantine: "I am not sorry to have a resting time between what we have seen and what we are to see, to say nothing of the comfort of quiet and stillness, after having been at sea for five weeks."[57] Newman's first night in the Lazaretto was, in fact, the first time since he had left England that he slept on dry land.

In retrospect, Newman declares that life in the Lazaretto was actually not all that disagreeable. "[I]t is really a very habitable place," Newman later admits.[58] He and the Froudes had large rooms. Newman himself was able to hire a violin for his own entertainment. He transcribed his verses for the *Lyra Apostolica*, and he began to study Italian with a private tutor. He and the others even had access to a boat for exploring the harbor and the coastline, if they wished. They were simply forbidden to go ashore. Nights at the Lazaretto, however, were not particularly restful, for it seems that the place was haunted. Newman heard odd footsteps in the night, and young Froude dreamed that he saw an evil spirit seated on his bed. Despite his Oxonian skepticism, Newman tells his sister Jemima that the haunting was "a phenomenon worth remembering."[59] Two nights before their release, Newman woke to the sound of a loud ruckus in the younger Froude's room next door to his own. Froude later reported that he himself had heard

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[55] Newman, *LD* v. III, 189 (To Jemima Newman, 15 January 1833).
[56] Newman, *LD* v. III, 160 (To Mrs Newman, 23 December 1832).
[57] Newman, *LD* v. III, 199 (To John William Bowden, 20 January 1833).
[58] Newman, *LD* v. III, 253 (To Samuel Francis Wood, 17 March 1833).
[59] Newman, *LD* v. III, 191 (To Jemima Newman, 15 January 1833).

nothing. Newman sat up in bed, foolishly exposing himself to the cold night air, and waited to confront the ghostly intruder. When the noise began again, he called out, and suddenly it stopped. But, sadly, in the whole affair, the only thing that Newman caught was a bad cough.

Newman's first impression of Malta betrays his interest in Mediterranean geology. "Malta is a strange place," he writes, "a literal rock of yellowish brown."[60] The Maltese themselves, however, fare much better in his estimation: "All agree they are a very industrious race, being an exception to the general Mediterranean character."[61] Newman also witnessed a clearly defined national spirit among the Maltese who distinguished themselves from both the previous government of the Knights and the present English administration.[62] But his general appraisal was hardly enthusiastic. For, sadly, once released from the Lazaretto, Newman had to remain, at Archdeacon Froude's insistence, more or less confined to his hotel room for almost a week on account of "the most wretched cough that [he] ever recollect[ed] having."[63] In 1880, Cardinal Newman will still painfully recall that Maltese cough![64] In 1833, it led him to conclude that "Malta is a most dangerous place, even for those who have not weak lungs."[65] Richard Hurrell Froude, however, the one among them who had the weak lungs, was, in fact, doing just fine and enjoying dinner out with his father every night![66] "In spite of the hospitality of the people there," Newman judges his stay in Malta to have been "a long and tiresome month."[67] The biographer and the historian will perhaps report little else, but the theologian perceives much more. In fact, three events of theological significance in Newman's development occurred during that otherwise unfortunate sojourn. Firstly, Newman gazed upon an apostolic landscape for the first time in his life. Secondly, as we shall argue, he entered a Roman Catholic church for the first time in his adult life, and, thirdly, he was deeply moved when beholding a Catholic layman at prayer - a scene that he poignantly describes in terms unmistakably reminiscent of his recently

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[60] Newman, *LD* v. III, 163 (To Harriett Newman, 25 December 1832).

[61] Newman, *LD* v. III, 205 (To Mrs Newman, 26 January 1833).

[62] See Newman *LD* v. III, 299 (To H. A. Woodgate, 17 April 1833).

[63] Newman, *LD* v. III, 204 (To Mrs Newman, 26 January 1833).

[64] See John Henry Newman, "To Mrs Edward Charlton, 21 January 1880," *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman: Supplement*, ed. Francis J. McGarth (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 2008), 32:405.

[65] Newman, *LD* v. III, 204 (To Mrs Newman, 26 January 1833).

[66] See John Henry Newman, "To E. B. Pusey, 21 August 1838," *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, ed. Gerard Tracey (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1984), 6:297-298.

[67] Newman, *LD* v. III, 299 (To H. A. Woodgate, 17 April 1833).

completed, but still to be revised and published study of the fourth-century Arian crisis.

Newman had been looking forward to spending Christmas in Malta, and thankfully, with only one exceptionally stormy night, favorable weather expedited the *Hermes*' arrival in port on Christmas Eve. But, when describing Christmas day itself in his diary, Newman simply records that is was "a miserable day."[68] For, other than reserving a room at the Lazaretto, Newman spent that entire day on board the *Hermes* without attending or officiating at any public prayer service.[69] "We are keeping the most wretched Christmas day I can conceive it to be my lot to suffer," he informs Harriett.[70] But despite that day's misery, its momentous nature did not completely escape young Newman. "One of the first sights we came to in Malta was St Paul's bay," he recounts:

> Where tradition goes that the blessed Apostle was wrecked. It is strange to be in a place where an Apostle has been; and it makes it still more afflicting thus to pass the day which especially celebrates the introduction of that glorious gospel which he preached.[71]

It was at Malta that John Henry Newman first stood - or, at least, floated - where an Apostle had once been. His occasionally rough sea-travels also brought home to him the suffering that the Apostle Paul himself had endured: "What a trial his journey to Rome must have been in a miserable vessel - but Scripture speaks so quietly and (so to say) modestly about the trials of the Saints that it requires some experience and care to find them out."[72] In Malta Newman's own journey became apostolic as he followed "almost precisely the track St Paul went from Malta to Rome."[73] In Rome, "the city of the apostles,"[74] Newman repeatedly returns to this apostolic theme in his correspondence. But Malta remains the first place directly associated with an Apostle that Newman came to know. That Christmas, otherwise so unpleasant, incarnated the apostolic age for Newman as never before. As the Word became flesh, the notional became real. The Apostolic Church, that had grounded his faith and all these theological endeavors, came alive.

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[68] Newman, *LD* v. III, 162 (Tuesday 25 December Christmas Day).
[69] See ibid.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Newman, *LD* v. III, 163 (To Harriett Newman, 25 December 1832).
[72] Newman, *LD* v. III, 193 (To Isaac Williams, 16 January 1833).
[73] Newman, *LD* v. III, 206 (To Mrs Newman, 26 January 1833).
[74] Ibid.

Despite the quarantine and his cough, Newman did manage to spend a few days visiting Valletta, a very fine place," he remarks.[75] On Thursday, 24 January 1833, he went to Saint John's Co-Cathedral. In his estimation, it was "most magnificent." [76] Its decoration far exceeded anything that he had ever seen. He was glad, moreover, to have seen it before visiting Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome so that, without making comparisons, he could admire the Maltese Cathedral on its own merits. Newman's visit to Saint John's is significant on two accounts. Firstly, all evidence points to the fact that it was the first time in his adult life that John Henry Newman set foot in a Catholic church. Secondly, the visit conjured up images that will eventually mature into his *Via Media* and ultimately lead him to full communion with the Catholic Church.

As a nine-year-old boy, John Henry had gone with his father to the Warwick Street Chapel in London - a Roman Catholic chapel attached to the Bavarian Embassy. His father had wanted to hear a piece of music. "All that I bore away from it," Newman recalls in the *Apologia*, "was the recollection of a pulpit and a preacher and a boy swinging a censer."[77] Such sights, of course, would have naturally attracted the attention of a young, evangelically minded, Christian boy. Otherwise, young John Henry took away little else from the visit. An often ridiculed émigré priest, who taught French at Newman's school, was the only Catholic of whom young Newman was ever immediately aware.[78] But otherwise, he had no contact with Catholics nor their churches until his 1833 Mediterranean tour. Writing from Greece in January of 1833, Newman does mention two Latin churches at Corfu. But he says nothing about having visited either of them, whereas he does describe in detail his visits to Corfu's Greek churches and the unsatisfactory service that he attended at the English chapel in the British garrison.[79] In Greece, Newman's interests were clearly Greek, not Roman. Given Newman's penchant for describing in notable detail everything that he saw, one can reasonably conclude that the Oriel Fellow's first visit to a Catholic church, as an adult, took place at Malta. Despite his sincere admiration for St. John's Co-Cathedral, Newman concludes that it is "the perversion of all the best"[80] and "a beautiful flower run to seed."[81] In other words, St. John's

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[75] Newman, *LD* v. III, 253 (To Samuel Francis Wood, 17 March 1833).
[76] Newman, *LD* v. III, 204 (To Mrs Newman, 26 January 1833).
[77] Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*,126. See also Newman, *LD* v. I, 7 (Diary for January 1811).
[78] See Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, 126.
[79] See Newman, *LD* v. III, 181 (To Harriett Newman, 2 January 1833).
[80] Newman, *LD* v. III, 204 (To Mrs Newman, 26 January 1833).
[81] Ibid.

symbolizes those Romanist corruptions that will figure prominently in his *Via Media*. Already, only the month before, Malta's apostolic landscape had moved Newman to admit that "surely there is something very wrong in the actual state of the Church in England - we are neither one thing or the other; neither strong enough to command obedience, nor loose enough to protest in our separate persons."[82] According to Newman, Anglicans wandered aimlessly between Roman authoritarianism and Protestant private judgment. Between these two guardrails - Roman corruptions and Protestant heresies - Tractarian Newman will attempt to pave a patristic path. While he knew Protestantism firsthand in England, he came to know Romanism through personal observation during his Mediterranean tour. His experience of the latter confirmed his prejudices, as it were, but it also silently sowed sympathetic seed deep within his mind and heart - a seed that slowly germinated under the frost of his youthful intellectual inconsistency.

Finally, on that miserable Christmas day of 1832, Newman beheld a Catholic layman at prayer in the quarantine. "This morning we saw a poor fellow in the Lazaretto close to us," Newman recounts:

> Cut off from the ordinances of his Church, saying his prayers towards the house of God which lay in his sight over the water - and it is a confusion of face indeed that the humble Romanist testified to his Savior in a way in which I, a minister, do not - yet I do what I can, and shall try to do more - for I am very spiteful.[83]

The scene clearly brought home to Newman an insight that he had gained in his research for *The Arians of the Fourth Century*, that is, the laity's role in defending the orthodox faith when ecclesiastical rulers betray it.

That Catholic layman's faithful witness particularly shamed Newman, for on that Christmas day neither he nor the Froudes - all three in Anglican Orders - offered any public prayers. "No prayers," Newman sadly records in his diary for Christmas day.[84] In his Christmas day letter to his sister Harriett, Newman confesses: "I do think, that deprived of the comfort and order of an Established Church, it is one's duty, almost as Paul and Silas, to sing praises in prison, so that others may hear."[85] In other words, like the Apostle and his companion in that ancient prison, the Church's ministers should unabashedly witness to Christ even when quarantined. Newman, the Anglican minister, had failed to do that

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[82] Newman, *LD* v. III, 163 (To Harriett Newman, 25 December 1832).
[83] Ibid.
[84] Newman, *LD* v. III, 162 (Tuesday 25 December Christmas Day).
[85] Newman, *LD* v. III, 162 (To Harriett Newman, 25 December 1832).

very thing. In that apostolic landscape, the Catholic layman's witness in the quarantine made Newman feel his own negligence even more acutely. "But all such cases, as befall one, are cases of degree," Newman argues in self-defense, "and St Paul was absolute and unlimited in his ministerial authority."[86] Nonetheless, as his notional knowledge of the Arian crisis became real in Malta, the experience stung Newman's conscience. In his future work *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, Newman will observe: "Did St. Athanasius or St. Ambrose come suddenly to life, it cannot be doubted what communion he would take to be his own."[87] They would recognize in the Communion of Rome the Church of the Fathers. From Malta, on that Christmas day in 1832, Newman implies that, had St. Paul come suddenly to life, it cannot be doubted that he would have recognized himself not in the silent minister who offered no prayers, but rather in the humble Romanist who openly prayed within the confines of that quarantine prison.

Newman left Malta on Thursday, 7 February, on board a Neapolitan steamer bound for Messina. He disembarked early the following morning. At Messina he heard a story that again recalled the laity's faithful witness despite the clergy's moral failure:

> We heard of one man who, while bearing his witness against the profligacy of the priesthood, rigidly attends Mass—and on being asked why, said that the Altar was above the priest, and that God could bless His own ordinance in spite of base instruments.[88]

In sum, both Malta and Messina provided Newman with contemporary examples of ancient insights that he had gained while researching *Arians*. These Mediterranean experiences brought his previous patristic studies into high relief and revealed their pertinence for the nineteenth century - a century that seemed to Newman even more bleak than the fourth. For despite these two notable examples of faithful lay Catholics, Newman was convinced that "the majority of the [Italian] laity who think run into infidelity."[89] Newman blames the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Empire for having "generated a plague [of infidelity] which is slowly working its way everywhere" since the peace of 1815.[90]

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[86] Ibid.

[87] John Henry Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, part I, chapter II, section III.5 (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), 97-98.

[88] Newman, *LD* v. III, 225 (To Mrs Newman, 28 February 1833).

[89] Ibid.

[90] Ibid.

For the remainder of his life, Newman will fight against this liberal, irreligious and secularizing threat.

Newman's month in Malta may have been personally miserable, but it was, nonetheless, theologically momentous. For it entailed his first direct encounter with an apostolic setting, his first visit as an adult to a Roman Catholic church, and his no longer merely notional recognition of the lay faithful's role in witnessing to the faith when his own clerical example failed. Newman's Maltese sojourn specifically echoes his previous scholarship and anticipates his future patristic insight into the consultation of the laity in matters of doctrine. When Newman left Malta, he reports that he was "in high spirits and good health."[91] It is also worth noting that, before he departed, he managed to ship off to his mother a crate of Maltese oranges.[92] As we have seen, those oranges were not the only fruits that he reaped there.

## Naples

After spending five memorable days in Sicily, Newman and the Froudes arrived in Naples on the morning of 14 February 1833. Two days in the Neapolitan capital were sufficient for Newman to form a very unfavorable impression: "We find a population from high to low, as it appears, immersed in the most despicable frivolity and worst profligacy, which is so much connected with religious observance as to give the city the character of a pagan worship."[93] "[R]eligion," he observes further, "is turned into a mere medium of gaiety and worldly festivity, as in the case of the Israelites."[94] Unfortunately, Newman had arrived in the midst of carnival. As for Naples itself, the city was "noisy, crowded and dirty"[95] - "a mere watering place" for animal pleasure. It was, he concluded, "a wretched city."[96] Returning to Naples five weeks later, Newman confesses that he had been too hard on the city at first, and he made an attempt to like it. But, in the end, he remained disappointed: "I have seen it twice, and my first opinion is confirmed."[97] Whether during carnival or not, Naples simply proved to be too much for him.

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[91] Newman, *LD* v. III, 253 (To Samuel Francis Wood, 17 March 1833).
[92] See Newman, *LD* v. III, 209 (From Mrs Newman, 28 February 1833).
[93] Newman, *LD* v. III, 211 (To Harriett Newman, 16 February 1833).
[94] Newman, *LD* v. III, 216 (To Jemima Newman, 19 February 1833).
[95] Newman, *LD* v. III, 248 (To George Ryder, 14 March 1833).
[96] Newman, *LD* v. III, 258 (To R. F. Wilson, 18 March 1833).
[97] Newman, *LD* v. III, 299 (To H. A Woodgate, 17 April 1833).

Mediterranean popular religiosity appalled young Newman who himself preferred "the quiet and calmness connected with [Anglican] services."[98] Even in Malta he notes "the sight of that most exciting religion which is around me - statues of Madonnas and Saints in the Streets, etc etc. A more poetical but not less jading stimulant than the pouring-forth in a Baptist Chapel."[99] In Naples the display of crucifixes and scenes of purgatory in the streets adversely jarred him.[100] Indeed, such Catholic devotionalism repulsed him. He considered such popular religion "as nearly pagan as you can fancy."[101] But ironically, it will be this same devotionalism that Newman will hold up as a note of the Catholic Church's veracity. Already as a Tractarian, he will argue against Protestants in terms of how an authentic system tends to corrupt. "It is plain," he contends:

> That the religious temper of Protestant times is not like that of the primitive Church, the existing liability in systems to certain degeneracies respectively being a sort of index of the tone and temper of each. As the corruptions, so are the respective originals. If his system never could become superstitious, it is not primitive.[102]

But, even after entering the Catholic Church, Newman could never wholly embrace an overly exuberant Mediterranean devotionalism. He was simply too English for that. Nonetheless, what had initially appalled him in 1833 later serves to confirm his Catholic faith.

## Rome

On 2 March 1833, Newman and his traveling companions reached Rome. Echoing his earlier observation made in Malta, he noted how strange it was "to be standing in the city of the apostles, and among the tombs of the martyrs and saints."[103] Yet, the reading of his youth, Milner on the Church Fathers and Newton on the apocalyptic prophecies, continued to leave him deeply conflicted. "Is it possible," he queries, "that so serene and lofty a place is the cage of unclean creatures?"[104] He was still convinced, after all, that Rome was Daniel's

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[98] Newman, *LD* v. III, 206 (To Mrs Newman, 26 January 1833).
[99] Ibid.
[100] See Newman, *LD* v. III, 294 (To Mrs Newman, 17 April 1833).
[101] Ibid.
[102] John Henry Newman, *The Church of the Fathers*, "Demetrias," ed. Francis McGrath (Herefordshire: Gracewing, 2002) 164.
[103] Newman, *LD* v. III, 232 (To Harriett Newman, 4 March 1833).
[104] Ibid., 230.

fourth beast awaiting its final chastisement. The spirit of old Rome - its *genius loci* - had possessed the Christian Church on its seven hills. Only an apocalyptic conflagration could liberate her. Until then the English could hope for no union with her. According to Newman, the Roman Catholic Church perpetuated the ancient pagan Empire's structures in her universal obedience, her Latin language and her political skill. The Papacy's exercise of temporal sovereignty, moreover, made it impossible to distinguish between the sacred and the secular. Truly, Christian Rome left Newman torn. "You are in the place of martyrdom and burial of Apostles and Saints," he reports to a friend at Oriel College:

> You have about you the buildings and sights they saw - and you are in the city to which England owes the blessing of the gospel - But then, on the other hand, the superstitions; - or rather, what is far worse, the solemn reception of them as an essential part of Christianity - and then on the contrary the knowledge that the most famous was built (in part) by the sale of indulgences - Really this is a cruel place.[105]

After one month in Rome, Newman detested the Roman Catholic system no less than before, "tho' I may be able to defend my opinion better and to feel it more vividly," he suggests.[106] Yet, he remained even more thoroughly attached to the *Catholic* system. As we have already noted, Newman argues that travel did not so much expand his knowledge as it deepened his awareness and strengthen his convictions. But the truth of the matter is that during his Mediterranean tour something did begin to change ever so subtly thanks to the people whom he met.

Even though Newman insists in his *Apologia* that he had steered clear of Catholics in 1833,[107] he does acknowledge that he had met the Dean of the Cathedral in Malta, a certain Father Santini in Rome, a priest at Castro-Giovanni in Sicily, and Monsignor Nicholas Wiseman on two occasions at Rome's Venerable English College. (Sixteen years later, it will be Bishop Wiseman who will send Newman back to Rome in order to prepare for the Catholic priesthood.) Newman's *Letters and Diaries* also indicate that he met the English Cardinal Thomas Weld,[108] Angelo Mai of the Vatican Library,[109] and "a number of interesting Irish and English priests"[110] whom he thought to be the "flower" of

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[105] Newman, *LD* v. III, 241 (To John Frederic Christie, 7 March 1833).
[106] Newman, *LD* v. III, 273 (To Mrs Newman, 5 April 1833).
[107] See Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*,150.
[108] See Newman, *LD* v. III, 247 (To Henry Wilberforce, 9 March 1833).
[109] See Newman, *LD* v. III, 255 (To Samuel Francis Wood, 17 March 1833).
[110] Newman, *LD* v. III, 273 (To Mrs Newman, 5 April 1833).

the Catholic clergy.[111] In fact, he lamented not having more time in order to get to know them better. He had heard rumors hinting at gross immorality among the Italian clergy, but his own immediate experience proved otherwise: "I like the looks of a great many of their priests - there is such simplicity, gentleness, and innocence among the Monks, I quite love them."[112] Newman goes so far to praise their Oxonianism.[113] But he continued to lament the Romanist system that crippled their energies like an iron chain.[114] "Rome is a very difficult place to speak of from the mixture of good and evil in it," Newman concludes:

> The heathen state was accursed as one of the 4 infidel monsters of Daniel's vision - and the Christian system there is deplorably corrupt - yet the dust of the Apostles lies there, and the present clergy are their descendants.[115]

Romanism exhibited a "lamentable mixture of truth with error," Newman observes, "the corruption of the highest and noblest views and principles, far higher than we Protestants have, with malignant poisons."[116] According to Newman, Rome exemplified in an extraordinary manner the parable of the tares and the wheat. "Indeed, the more I have seen of Rome," he writes, "the more wonderful I have thought that parable, as if it had a directly prophetic character which was fulfilled in the Papacy."[117] That lamentable mixture confronted Newman during Pope Gregory XVI's Mass on the feast of the Annunciation celebrated at the Dominican Church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva. Here was the Pope whose temporal power united him with the Enemy of God. His attendants carried him aloft in procession while others reverenced his foot with a kiss. A young evangelically minded Newman found such homage offered to a minister of Christ to be intolerable. Yet, as Christ's minister, the Pope performed the Church's sacred rites. Those liturgical rites did, in fact, move young Newman. Consequently, the whole experience left him quite torn. He knew naught else to do than to repeat to himself the words of his own verse that Rome had previously inspired: "How shall I name thee, Light of the wide west, or heinous error-seat?"[118] Newman's immediate experience of Rome both confirmed and challenged his previous notional knowledge. Twelve years will pass before he

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[111] Newman, *LD* v. III, 280 (To Henry Jenkyns, 7 April 1833).
[112] Newman, *LD* v. III, 289 (To Samuel Rickards, 7 April 1833).
[113] Newman, *LD* v. III, 277 (To John Frederic Christie, 6 April 1833).
[114] See ibid.
[115] Newman, *LD* v. III, 287 (To Samuel Rickards, 7 April 1833).
[116] Newman, *LD* v. III, 280 (To Henry Jenkyns, 7 April 1833).
[117] Newman, *LD* v. III, p. 289 (To Samuel Rickards, 14 April 1833).
[118] Newman, *LD* v. III, p. 268 (To Mrs Newman, 25 March 1833).

will enter into full communion with the Church of Rome. But already, in 1833, his correspondence reveals a certain willingness to recognize her inherent good.

## Sicily and Beyond

On Tuesday, 9 April 1833, Newman and the Froudes parted ways. Newman suffered deeply the loss of his two traveling companions. For in itself it was an anticipation of the young Froude's death—a "future too painful for me to mention," Newman writes.[119] The Froudes left Rome for Cività Vecchia, the first stop on their return journey to England via France. Newman headed south to Naples with a certain Mr. Barclay - a mere acquaintance whose loquacious manner the bereaving Newman found burdensome.[120] While in Naples, Newman wrote to Samuel Rickards, an Anglican clergyman and former Oriel Fellow, informing him that upon his return to England he intended to re-write nearly one-third of his book on the Arian crisis. "I think this will be a great improvement," he explains, "tho' I rather dread the labour."[121] The Arian crisis' majestic Mediterranean setting had, no doubt, stimulated his further reflections. Clearly, after months of travel across the Mediterranean Sea, young Newman had ceased to be a merely secluded reading man.

On Friday, 19 April, he left the Italian peninsula for Messina. For he was "drawn by an irresistible attraction to the fair levels and richly verdured heights of Sicily."[122] Some twelve days into his second Sicilian excursion, he fell seriously ill with typhoid fever contracted, it seems, in Naples. Almost out of his senses, Newman came close to dying at Castro-Giovanni in central Sicily. While his Italian guide prepared for the worst, Newman himself was convinced that he would survive. "I thought," he explains, "God has work for me."[123] By mid-May, Newman recovered and was eager to return home. But he remained stranded for some weeks in Palermo because the sailboat, on which he had booked passage, had to await favorable winds before it could set sail. Newman bided his time by visiting Palermo's churches where, although ignorant of the Blessed Sacrament, he found peace.[124] By 11 June, he was on the high seas bound for Marseilles. On

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[119] Ibid.

[120] See Ibid.

[121] Ibid., 273. See also John Henry Newman, "To Thomas Mozley, 5 August 1833," *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, eds. Ian Ker and Thomas Gornall (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1980), 6:24; Newman, *LD* v. IV, 26 (To John Frederic Christie, 6 August 1833).

[122] Newman, *LD* v. III, 277 (To John Frederic Christie, 6 April 1833).

[123] Newman, *LD* v. III, 314 (To Frederic Rogers, 5 June 1833).

[124] See Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, 152.

the way, the winds failed them once again for a week in the straits of Bonifacio. During that calm at sea, Newman wrote those famous lines, "Lead, Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom/ Lead Thou me on!" In 1833 Newman knew that a work ordained by God awaited him, but what that work entailed remained a mystery to him. In hindsight, however, one can easily discern theological anticipations of Newman's future endeavors already present in his 1833 Mediterranean correspondence. For whether it be in the Oxford Movement and his Tractarian efforts, or in the Oratory's foundation and his Catholic labors, Newman sought in all things to make patristics pertinent for the good of the contemporary Church.

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